

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

A Host Record for *Trichoptilus xerodes* Meyr. (Lepidoptera: Pterophoridae).—Many small arthropods are unable to escape adhesion to the glutinous tips of the stems of *Acacia rossei* F. Muell. A species of caterpillar which was able to feed and live successfully on even the stickiest portions of the plant was brought to my attention by Drs. A. R. and B. Y. Main. I reared some of these caterpillars, which were collected by Dr. B. Y. Main and me on December 22, 1963. The final instar and the pupal periods each lasted about a week and the moth emerged on January 8, 1964. It was kindly identified by Mr. I. F. B. Common, Division of Entomology, C.S.I.R.O., Canberra, as *Trichoptilus xerodes* Meyr.

The caterpillars were collected from a single plant of *A. rossei* growing in a garden at Nedlands, W.A. Mr. R. D. Royce, Chief Botanist, State, Herbarium, who identified the plant, states that *A. rossei* grows mainly in patches of sandplain country 4 to 25 miles E. of Southern Cross, W.A. I know of no other recorded food-plant of *T. xerodes*.

L. E. KOCH, W.A. Museum, Perth.

Plumed Tree-Ducks at Meekatharra.—In October 1963, Mr. C. Fisher, of Meekatharra, forwarded to the Fisheries Department for identification a strange duck that had been shot in his district. The bird was taken to the Western Australian Museum and identified as a Plumed Tree-Duck (*Dendrocygna eytoni*). Mr. Fisher said that it had been one of 25 on a section of the Murchison River known as Irridabubba Pool, about 75 miles west of Meekatharra.

This was the first report in many years of the taking of a Tree-Duck in this State south of the Kimberley Land Division where two species of the genus occur. The species taken at Meekatharra is limited to Australia and is generally a northern one but it has been recorded as far south as Carnamah. The second species of Tree-Duck in the north is the Whistling Tree-Duck (*Dendrocygna arcuata*) which is found all over southern Asia and in the Pacific Islands north to the Philippines. Both species occasionally penetrate into southern Australia, more commonly in the eastern States, and wanderers have also been picked up in Tasmania and New Zealand. There are no nesting records in this State south of the Kimberley Land Division.

—H. B. SHUGG, Fisheries Department, Perth.

Mediterranean Snail, *Theba pisana*, at Collie and Other Localities.—V. N. Scrventy's record of the Mediterranean Snail in an inland locality (*W. Aust. Nat.*, 9: 92) prompts me to make a belated report on the species at Collie where it is firmly established in several areas.

In 1957, when I moved to Venn Street, Collie, I found these snails present, though less frequent than *Helix aspersa*. As the

snails were confined to one part of the garden, I made an effort to eradicate the species and this for a time appeared successful. However, the snails reappeared in even greater abundance and were still present when I left Collie at the end of 1962.

A series of shells collected in Collie is significantly darker than similar series from maritime situations.

Snails and slugs are sometimes transported in garden produce such as lettuce—a possible means of introduction to inland areas.

In late August and early September 1961, my son Lindsay and I accompanied Mr. Julian Ford on an excursion from Perth to Port Gregory. Specimens of *Theba pisana* were collected at Port Gregory, Freshwater Point and Lancelin.

Dunsborough is another locality not specifically recorded from which I have specimens.

—ERIC H. SEDGWICK, Harvey.

Red-tailed Tropic-bird at Collie.—In June 1964, the Superintendent of the South Perth Zoo, Mr. W. K. Lyall, notified the Fisheries Department that Mr. Laurie Moloney, of Buckingham, via Collie, was holding an unidentified bird. From the description given it seemed that it was a sea bird and a letter was sent to Mr. Moloney requesting him to forward it to Perth for identification. The bird was duly received at the Museum and subsequently passed to Dr. D. L. Serventy to be cared for by Miss C. A. Nicholls.

We were surprised to discover that the bird was an immature Red-tailed Tropic-bird (*Phaethon rubricauda*). In recent years this species has shown a tendency to nest south of the Abrolhos which had been the only regularly used breeding site on our coast. In 1939, a bird was found brooding an egg on a beach at Busselton and, in 1957, three Tropic-birds nested on Rottnest Island, but none was successful in raising any progeny. The discovery of the young bird by Mr. Moloney suggests very strongly that successful breeding must have taken place south of the Abrolhos this year. No doubt this immature bird would have been driven inland by the gales experienced about the time of its finding.

—H. B. SHUGG, Fisheries Department, Perth.

Red-tailed Tropic-bird Near Cape Naturaliste.—During a holiday at Dunsborough I paid a visit on March 28, 1964, to Sugarloaf, a well-known fishing spot a little to the south of Cape Naturaliste. The sun-dried remains of a Red-tailed Tropic-bird (*Phaethon rubricauda*) were found on the hillside facing the sea. Measurements were: wing, 340 mm.; culmen, 66 mm.; tarsus, 35 mm. The species has been recorded from the same general area by Serventy and Whittell (*Birds of Western Australia*, 1962: 101) and by Warham (*W.A. Nat.*, 5, 1956: 120).

—LYALL McHUGH, Sydney.